

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 4232

CINCPACREP PASS TO STATUS LNO SAIPAN AND HICOM

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AS, TQ

SUBJECT: TTPI - AUSTRALIAN "LEADER GRANT" PROGRAM IN MICRONESIA

REF: STATE 133457

1. EMBOFF MET JULY 3 WITH MISS MCPHERSON, SOUTH PACIFIC SECTION, AND LIONEL PHILLIPS, CULTURAL RELATIONS SECTION, OF DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON SUBJECT PROGRAM. DURING CONVERSATION IT BECAME ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT DFA DOES NOT ENVISAGE SEPARATE PROGRAM FOR MICRONESIA NOR DOES IT ANTICIPATE MORE THAN SMALL NUMBER OF PEOPLE FROM MICRONESIA COULD BE INVITED UNDER SMALL AUSTRALIAN SPECIAL OVERSEAS VISITORS FUND. WHEN PRESSED, PHILLIPS NOTED THAT THE TOTAL AUSTRALIAN OVERSEAS VISITOR PROGRAM HAS BUDGET OF ABOUT \$200,000 A YEAR AND THEY ARE STRETCHED PRETTY THIN ON WORLDWIDE BASIS TO PROVIDE SUITABLE NUMBER OF GRANTS. BOTH MCPHERSON AND PHILLIPS INDICATED THAT INVITATION TO REPRESENTATIVE MOSES OF PONAPE WAS AN AD HOC DECISION BASED UPON RECOMMENDATION OF AUSTRALIAN REP IN NAURU, SELLERS. THEY INDICATED, HOWEVER, THAT ADDITIONAL GRANTS TO MICRONESIANS, PROBABLY ONE A YEAR, MIGHT BE APPROVED IF SUITABLE CANDIDATES CAN BE FOUND. THEY ALSO STATED THAT DEPARTMENT'S QUESTIONS ON THIS PROGRAM INDICATED A MUCH GREATER DEGREE OF COORDINATION AND PROJECTION ON THE PROGRAM WITHIN GOA THAN IS IN FACT THE CASE.

2. EMBOFF NOTED THAT POLITICAL SITUATION IN TRUST TERRITORY IS EXTREMELY SENSITIVE AND THAT USG WOULD APPRECIATE OPPORTUNITY ON

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INFORMAL BASIS TO COMMENT UPON ANY FUTURE CANDIDATES FROM TTPI FOR

AUSTRALIAN PROGRAM. BOTH PHILLIPS AND MCPHERSON EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THIS POINT AND INDICATED THEY ARE PREPARED TO INFORM EITHER EMBASSY AND/OR DEPT OF STATE THROUGH AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY, WASHINGTON, ABOUT SUCH CANDIDATES. IN CASE OF MOSES, THEY INDICATED SELLERS HAD RAISED HIS NOMINATION DIRECTLY WITH HIGH COMMISSIONER JOHNSON AND BELIEVED THAT HE HAD POSED NO OBJECTION TO MOSES ACCEPTING GRANT.

3. EMBOFF STATED IN CONCLUSION USG WELCOMES AUSTRALIAN INITIATIVE IN MATTER OF GIVING FEW GRANTS TO LEADERS. WE REITERATED THAT EXPOSURE TO OTHER COUNTRIES THROUGH SUCH VISITS COULD BE VERY EDUCATIVE FOR TTPI LEADERSHIP AND COULD, IN FACT, SUPPORT USG EFFORTS IN TERRITORY.

4. COMMENT: IMPLICATION THAT GOA IS CONSIDERING ANY LARGE NUMBER OF GRANTS TO INHABITANTS OF TTPI UNDER ITS OVERSEAS VISITOR FUND PROGRAM OBVIOUSLY CAUGHT DFA REPS UNPREPARED. THEY HAD APPROVED MOSES NOMINATION PRIMARILY AS AN ACCOMMODATION TO AUSTRALIAN REP SELLERS IN NAURU AND ARE PREPARED TO CONSIDER SIMILAR NOMINATIONS IN FUTURE. IT IS CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH NOMINATIONS WILL BE FEW CONSIDERING SIZE AND SCOPE OF SPECIAL OVERSEAS VISITOR FUND AS ADUMBRATED BY PHILLIPS. EMBOFF BELIEVES BOTH PHILLIPS AND MCPHERSON WILL MAKE SURE TO INFORM US WHEN OTHER POSSIBLE CANDIDATES HAVE BEEN RECOMMENDED BY SELLERS FOR INCLUSION IN ANY PARTICULAR YEAR'S PROGRAM.
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